THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI H. K. L. BHAGAT): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) The 100 KW MW transmitter located at Tiruchirapalli which was recently commissioned provides extended radio coverage to large areas of Coimbatore district. Besides, during the Seventh Plan (1985—90), a new radio station with 2x5 KW FM transmitter is proposed to be set up at Kodaikanal. This will provide Radio coverage to entire Coimbatore district.

Increase in the prices of essential commodities

298. SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY: Will the Minister of FOOD AND CIVIL SUPPLIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the prices of essential commodities have considerably increased during the last three months in comparison to the last year's;

(b) if so, the reasons thereof; and

(c) whether Government have taken any steps to bring down the prices of essential commodities in the country, if so, the details thereof?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF FOOD AND CIVIL SUPPLIES (SHRI D. L. BAITHA): (a) to (c) The All-Commodities Wholesale Price Index (WPI) moved up by 1.5 per cent during the three months period ending 15-10-1988, while it had moved up by 1.9 per cent during three months period ,between 18-7-87 and 17-10-87) last year. Trend in the wholesale price indices of selected essential commodities exhibited a mixed trend. The wholesale Price Index of some commodities have gone up while some have come down and a few have remained steady.

The rise in the prices of some of the essential commodities during the period is due to shortfall in production on account of severe drought in 1987 and its after effect in 1988, lean season and disruption in supplies on acount of floods and heavy rains in some areas. The Government have taken a number of measures to contain rise in the prices of essential commodities. The main thrust of the Government Policy has been to increase production of various essential commodities particularly those which are in short supply. To augment the domestic supply the Government has allowed import of some of the items like pulses, edible oils and sugar etc. and regulation on export of the essential commodities. Other measures taken to bring down the prices of essential commodities include strengthening of the Public Distribution System (PDS), opening of more Fair Price Shops, increased allocation of essential commodities and monitoring of the prices and availability of the essential commodities From time to time the Chief Ministers and Lt. Governors have been urged to enforce strictly the provisions of the Essential Commodities Act and similar other legislations against hoarders, black marketeers and anti-social elements. Distribution of selected essential commodities is also being effected through mobile vans in far flung hilly areas and remote areas.

Loss of cotton due to pests

299. SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) what is the estimated loss to the cotton growers of Andhra Pradesh following destruction of crops by pests during the last one year;

(b) the number of cotton growers who have committed suicide following

destruction of their crops in that State;

(c) whether the Central Government have issued instructions to the Banks to waive the interest on the loans given to cotton growers of that State and if not, the reasons therefor;

(d) whether Government propose to provide special relief to the affected cotton growers on the lines of drought, cyclones; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND COOPERATION IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHYAM LAL YADAV): (a) to (e) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the Sabha.

Defective fishing boats manufactured by Indian Yards

300. KUMARI SUSHILA TIRIA: Will the Minister of FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have received any representation/complaints regarding defective manufacturing of fishing boats in Indian Yards which are being financed by Government;

(b) whether the small entrepreneurs are being forced to buy these defective boats; and

(c) if so, the steps being taken by Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES (SHRI JAGDISH TYTLER): (a) and (b) A Representation was received regarding fitment of particular type of engine in the fishing vessels under Construction in Indian Ship-Yard. This was examined and a reply was sent indicating that Indian Ship-Yard can import 30 per cent of the components including the main engine for fitment in indigenously constructed deep sea fishing Vessels. Government do not force any entrepreneurs to use any particular type of engine, leaving the choice entirely to the owners.

(c) Does not arise.

Upliftment of tribals in Orissa

301. KUMARI SUSHILA TIRIA: Will the Minister of WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) the number of schemes launched in Orissa at the beginning of the Seventh Plan for the upliftment of tribals in the State;

(b) the details of employment generated and infrastructure created in the tribal belts;

(c) the extent to which the targets so fixed, have been achieved; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor and the steps taken to achieve the targets?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF WELFARE (SHRIMATI SUMATI ORAON): (a) The schemes taken up under the Tribal Sub Plan (TSN), which is under implementation in Orissa throughout the period of the VII Five Year Plan, fall broadly into the following four categories:

(i) Family oriented income generating schemes.

(ii) Infrastructure development programmes.

(iii) Human resources development programmes; and

(iv) Anti-exploitative measures.